

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Amended) ~~The~~ A modular gauge assembly of claim 1 having a plurality of modular blocks carrying removable loopers, said blocks being mountable to a tufting machine gauge bar, wherein:
 - (a) the modular blocks each comprise:
 - (i) a front surface, a pair of side surfaces opposed to each other, a rear surface for engaging with the gauge bar opposite to the front surface, a top surface and a bottom surface;
 - (ii) a plurality of vertical parallel openings transversely spaced between the opposing side surfaces for receiving loopers;
 - (iii) a pin opening extending transversely between the opposing side surfaces;
 - and
 - (iv) a bolt passage in communication with the pin opening;
 - (b) the loopers have proximal ends received in the parallel openings of the modular block;
 - (c) a lateral pin extends transversely and substantially through the pin opening of the modular block; and
 - (d) a securing bolt having a leading end extends through the bolt passage and biases the lateral pin against the proximal end of a looper;

wherein the modular block comprises a second pin opening extending transversely between

opposing side surfaces; a bracing pin extends transversely and substantially through said second pin opening; and the proximal ends of the ~~gauge elements~~ loopers received within the parallel slots of the modular block are interposed between the bracing pin and the lateral pin.

3. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein the proximal ends of the ~~gauge elements~~ loopers have a channel to receive a lateral pin.

4. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein the bolt passage is a threaded opening for receiving a threaded securing bolt.

5. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein a detent extends from the rear surface of the block.

6. (Original) The modular gauge assembly of claim 5 wherein the detent engages with a spaced recess on the gauge bar.

7. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein the lateral pin has at least two segments.

8. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein the lateral pin comprises a malleable metal.

9. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein the leading end of the securing bolt is conical and exerts a camming force on the lateral pin.

10. (Amended) ~~The~~ A modular gauge assembly of claim ~~1~~ having a plurality of modular blocks carrying removable loopers, said blocks being mountable to a tufting machine gauge bar, wherein:

(a) the modular blocks each comprise:

(i) a front surface, a pair of side surfaces opposed to each other, a rear surface for engaging with the gauge bar opposite to the front surface, a top surface and a bottom surface;

(ii) a plurality of vertical parallel openings transversely spaced between the opposing side surfaces for receiving the loopers;

(iii) a pin opening extending transversely between the opposing side surfaces;
and

(iv) a bolt passage in communication with the pin opening;

(b) the loopers have proximal ends received in the parallel openings of the modular block;

(c) a lateral pin extends transversely and substantially through the pin opening of the modular block; and

(d) a securing bolt having a leading end extends through the bolt passage and biases the lateral pin against the proximal end of a looper;

wherein the first plurality of vertical parallel openings are slots and modular block has a second plurality of parallel vertical slots transversely spaced between the opposing side surfaces for receiving proximal ends of ~~gauge elements~~second loopers.

11. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim 10 wherein a second lateral pin extends through a second pin opening between the opposing side surfaces of the modular block and is adjacent to the proximal ends of ~~gauge elements~~second loopers received within the second plurality of vertical slots.

12. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim 1-2 wherein a fastener secures the modular block to the gauge bar.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim 1-2 wherein the gauge

elements are disposed in a plane normal to the length of the lateral pin.

15. (Amended) The modular gauge assembly of claim 1-~~2~~ wherein the securing bolt is positioned in a plane normal to the length of the lateral pin.

16. (Amended) A modular block assembly for use in a tufting machine comprising:

(a) a modular block having a front surface, a pair of opposed side surfaces, a rear surface for engaging with a gauge bar, a top surface and a bottom surface; and a plurality of vertical parallel openings separated by vertical walls and transversely spaced between the opposing side surfaces; and a pin opening extending transversely between the opposing side surfaces;

(b) a plurality of ~~gauge elements~~ loopers having a distal end and a proximal end, the proximal ends of said ~~gauge elements~~ loopers being received in the vertical parallel openings of the modular block;

(c) a lateral pin extending transversely through the pin opening of the modular blocks; and

(d) a first securing bolt having a leading end in contact with the lateral pin and biasing the lateral pin against a plurality of ~~gauge elements~~ loopers wherein the modular block comprises a second pin opening extending transversely between the opposing side surfaces; a bracing pin extends transversely and substantially through said second pin opening; and the proximal ends of loopers received within the parallel openings are interposed between the bracing pin and the lateral pin.

17. (Original) The modular block assembly of claim 16 wherein the leading end of the securing bolt is conical, having a side wall coming to a vertice, and said side wall of the

leading end is in contact with the lateral pin.

18. (Original) The modular block assembly of claim 16 wherein the lateral pin has a plurality of segments and a second securing bolt has a leading end in contact with a segment other than the segment contacted by the first securing bolt.

19. (Original) The modular block assembly of claim 18 wherein a lateral pin segment contacts a plurality of gauge elements.

20. (Original) The modular block assembly of claim 16 wherein the lateral pin is slightly deformable when biased by the leading end of the first securing bolt.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (New) The modular gauge assembly of claim 10 wherein the proximal ends of the second loopers have a channel to receive a lateral pin.

23. (New) The modular gauge assembly of claim 10 wherein a detent extends from the rear surface of the block.